

Arlene's life was dedicated to family, friends and her community. Her memory lives on in our thoughts and prayers. She will always have a special place in our hearts. She was special to all of us. She is now in a better place with her heavenly Father and at peace.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, a snowstorm in Milwaukee cancelled all flights to Washington, DC yesterday, and I was unable to vote on rollcall votes 29, 30, and 31. Had I been present I would have voted "yes" on all three.

#### RECOVERY REBATES AND ECONOMIC STIMULUS FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

#### HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 29, 2008*

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Recovery Rebates and Economic Stimulus for the American People Act, and to commend Speaker PELOSI and Minority Leader BOEHNER for their bipartisan, timely action to get our economy moving.

In Minnesota, median household income has decreased 6.8 percent since 2000, job growth is lagging, and families are being squeezed by increasing gas, health care and education costs. While the cost of the Iraq war has grown to \$36,900 per Minnesota household, over 400,000 Minnesotans live in poverty, families are losing their homes, and a growing number are uninsured.

This bill provides a recovery rebate check for 117 million families to help with rising costs and reinvigorate the economy. These rebates are targeted to middle-income Americans and additional assistance is provided for families with children. In Minnesota, the average rebate will be \$952 and over 2 million families will benefit from this tax relief. H.R. 5140 also provides tax incentives to small businesses to help create jobs, and it increases access to affordable refinancing opportunities to help families keep their homes.

H.R. 5140 is timely, targeted and temporary. While enactment of this package will give the economy a needed boost, it is not the end of our efforts. Congress needs to have a serious discussion about unemployment benefits, food stamps and aid to states facing deficits. And in order to truly grow our economy we need to invest in our infrastructure, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, educate our children, address the health care crisis and end the war in Iraq.

There are significant challenges facing this country, and I am pleased that all parties were able to work together to put together this positive first step. I urge my colleagues to take real action today and to support H.R. 5140.

NANDO GOMEZ

#### HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of my most trusted staff members, my Chief of Staff, Fernando P. "Nando" Gomez, Jr. After working in Congress for 7 years, the past 2 as my chief of staff, Nando will be joining the private sector.

Nando's dedication to and interest in public service has led him from the small town of Gregory, TX, to the corridors of two Capitols. During his senior year at the University of Texas in 1994, he began working for the Texas House Speaker James E. "Pete" Laney. Nando worked for Speaker Laney for nearly 5 years and was appointed the House reading clerk during the 74th and 75th Legislative Sessions.

He then moved to Washington, DC in 1998 and worked for Congressman Martin Frost, serving as legislative assistant and then as legislative director. He joined my staff in 2005 and rose from Legislative Director to Chief of Staff.

Words cannot begin to describe what Nando has meant to me, my staff, and the people of the 27th district of Texas. I have relied on Nando for his professionalism, work ethic, and friendship. He takes pride in his work, which is especially personal to him because he was born and raised in the district I represent. For him, it has not just been about serving as my chief of staff—it is about advocating for the issues of his hometown, his family, and his roots.

Nando has also taken an active role with local youth. He serves in Big Brothers/Big Sisters Mentor program, where he has had the honor of serving as big brother to his little brother, Franklin, for nearly 5 years. Nando is an avid sports fan whose allegiances lie with the Texas Longhorns, Houston Astros, San Antonio Spurs and the Dallas Cowboys.

Though I bid Nando a sad farewell from my office, it will certainly not be a good bye. I look forward to seeing him around the Capitol when he comes up to catch up with old friends.

Nando remains a trusted member of my family, and I will always seek his counsel on matters political and personal. I wish him, his wife Kristy and son Dominic the best of luck during the new phase of his life.

#### HONORING LEGO'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

#### HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, for the past 50 years LEGO has transformed childhood play and provided invaluable academic and economic contributions to local communities around the globe. On January 29, 2008, LEGO celebrated its 50th anniversary. I rise today to recognize 50 years of LEGO innovation and contributions.

LEGO USA headquarters is located in my district in Enfield, Connecticut. Over the past

three decades since headquarters moved from Brookfield to Enfield, Connecticut in 1975, the company has made substantial contributions to the local community. Today it remains the town's largest employer. Although the Enfield offices have struggled in recent years in light of increasing globalization pressures, I remain hopeful that it will continue to innovate and thrive as part of Connecticut's economy. Education and family programs, which have been highlights of the corporation in the past, will continue to have positive lasting impacts on the community in the future.

The LEGO Creative Child Care Center KinderCare@Work program, which accommodates children ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age, has received national accolades for quality childhood development services. LEGO's KinderCare@Work program incorporates an engaging, thought-provoking curriculum into a healthy and safe environment for children from the local community. Quality early education programs, like LEGO's KinderCare@Work, are essential for promoting academic and professional success in latter years and should be a model for other private and public early education programs.

Programs geared towards middle and high school students, such as the FIRST LEGO League (FLL), also provide impetus for academic success and an environmentally and socially conscientious society. FLL programs encourage students to look at problems currently affecting global communities from a pragmatic and analytical perspective. LEGO USA has been a regular host of FLL tournaments. In 2007, students from Enfield and all of Connecticut joined students from around the globe in addressing a fundamental question that continues to be the focus of leading environmentalists, engineers, scientists, and politicians: the economic, environmental, and social impact that our energy consumption choices have on our global community.

From, simple yellow and red blocks to black knights and ninjas, the iconic toy has remained a classic, thought-provoking source of play for children around the world. For providing positive academic and economic development in communities around our globe and inspiring generations of artists, architects, and engineers, I ask my colleagues to join with me and my constituents in honoring LEGO's 50th anniversary.

#### HONORING ANDREW "JACK" FULTZ

#### HON. GEOFF DAVIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 7, 2008*

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a great Kentuckian.

Andrew "Jack" Fultz served Carter County for most of his life. He coached the Olive Hill High School basketball team from 1951 to 1968, leading the team to the State tournament in 1955, 1956 and 1959. He became a good friend and father-figure to many of his players and maintained that connection long after they were finished playing. Jack ended his career with an impressive win-loss record and was inducted into the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.